

ATARAXIS ¹ (I BRAKE FOR SQUIRRELS)

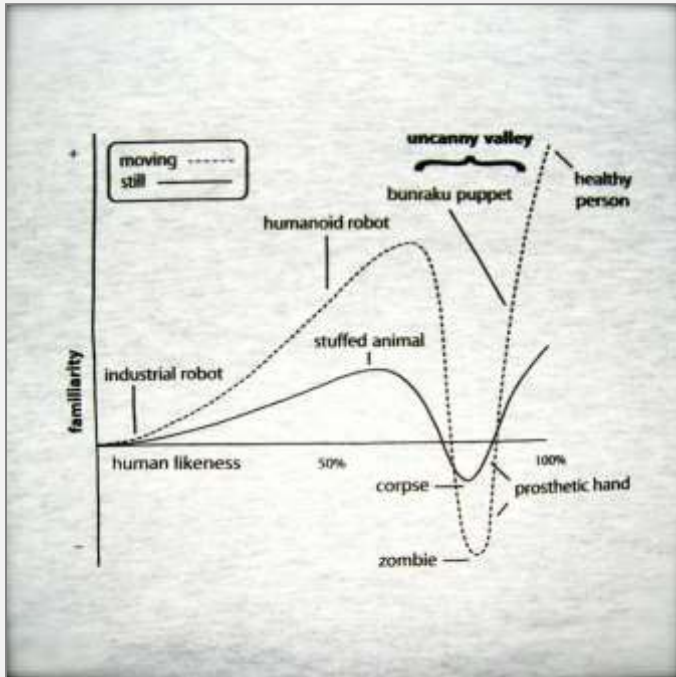
BUZZ WORDS ON A BIT MAP
 IN THE CROSSHAIRS OF A SAD SACK...
 BLACK TIES OFF A THIRD RAIL
 PAST THE CROSSROAD TO THE BELLERIN' PLAIN²...

IF IT'S RIGHT, THEN IT MIGHT
 BE THE WORDS IN A SONG;
 IF IT'S WRONG, THEN FOR SURE
 THAT'S WHEN YOU SING ALONG.

I BRAKE FOR SQUIRELS
 HEADIN' DOWN DEAD MAN'S CURVE³:
 A LONE ROUTE, LINED IN HEARTSEASE⁴
 'LONG THE FLAT EARTH AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD.

STORM DRAIN FULL OF SAND BAG
 FROM THE STAR-CROSS OF THE HEAP SLAG...
 BLACK SHEEP DRINK THE PIPE FLOOD
 AT THE BLIND END OF THE TAPLINE ROAD⁵...

IF IT'S RIGHT....



UNCANNY VALLEY ⁶

I AM A MEMORY
 MIMED IN A MEMO
 THAT YOU SCRAWLED INSIDE OUT.

I AM A MEMORY
 TIMED IN A DEMO
 THAT YOU PITCHED INSIDE OUT...

FANCIED 'TIL TIME HAS FORSAKEN—
 NOW JUST A BALL-JOINTED⁷ BUM
 DEPUTIZED TO TURN OUT MISTAKEN;
 A STILL LIFE FATED FOR NO ONE...

STOCKPILED TO STAY ON FORSAKEN,
 FOUND IN GIN-JOINT⁸ OBLIVION.
 ANALOGUE TASTES LIKE ARMAGEDDON⁹—
 A STILL LIFE FETED FOR NO ONE.

I AM A MEMORY
 DEALT IN A DIARY
 THAT YOU BURNED INSIDE OUT.

¹ Ataraxis is the absence of mental stress or anxiety.

² "Bellerin' Plain" is track 5 on *Lick My Decals Off, Baby*, by Captain Beefheart & His Magic Band (1970)

³ "Dead Man's Curve" is a commonly used name given to hazardous curves on US roads that have claimed lives due to accidents

⁴ Heartsease is the flower *Viola tricolor*, a progenitor of the pansy, referred to in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as "Love-in-Idleness"

⁵ Tapline Road is the road which parallels the Trans-Arabian Pipeline, extending across Saudi Arabia to Lebanon and built in the late '40s by major US oil companies

⁶ "Uncanny Valley" is the hypothesis in robotics explaining the repulsive reaction by humans to replicas that look and behave like humans

⁷ Ball-jointed: as in a doll articulated with ball and socket joints

⁸ Gin-joint is a reference to Rick's line from *Casablanca*, "Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine"

⁹ Tastes Like Armageddon is a play on the title of *Star Trek* episode "A Taste of Armageddon" and the slang "tastes like chicken"

WHEN YOU REACH PALODES ¹⁰

DON'T MISTAKE THE VOICE,
WHEN YOU REACH PALODES.
WHOSE MURMURS MISS THE BOAT
LIKE WILLOWS WEEPING WHISPERED TEARS?

NATURE IN DISGUISE
WAITING FOR HER TIME TO FLOWER?
INVASIVE MEN OF LIES
STAGGERED AT HER FINEST HOUR?

NATURE'S GOT A WAY
OF TELLING YOU TO TAKE A HIKE.
PANIC HAS ITS DAY
WHILE AEONS FLOW IN HALCYON NIGHT.

DON'T MISTAKE THE VOICE,
WHOSE MURMURS MISS THE BOAT
AFLOAT ON WILLOWED SEAS
WHEN YOU REACH PALODES.

WHEN YOU REACH PALODES—
DON'T MISTAKE THE VOICE;
DON'T MISTAKE THE WHISPERED TEARS...



ALECTRYON AT THE DOOR ¹¹

I HEARD THE VOICES
LIKE A DAWN CHORUS;
TWO SONGS ENTWINING
LIKE MORNING GLORY

AROUND THE LATTICE
OF ECHO'S¹² HEADBOARD.
ALECTRYON SLEEPS
SICK AT THE STONE DOOR.

I AM THE SUN,
AND YOU ARE GOING DOWN.

I AM THE FLAT SUN
SLIPPED UNDER DREAM'S DOOR,
LETTING SLIP STORIES
OF UNTOLD GODS O' WAR.

CONQUERED TERRAINS CREEP
DOWN ACHERON'S SHORE;¹³
THERE EVER I WEEP—
A FORFEIT TROUBADOUR.

I AM THE SUN...

¹⁰ In Antiquity, Palodes is a site which cannot be identified with any certainty; Palodes is referred to in Plutarch's "Obsolence of Oracles" whose common reading is that the Greek god Pan is dead. Plutarch records that news of Pan's death came to a sailor making his way to Italy. A divine voice asked of him, "When you reach Palodes, take care to proclaim the great god Pan is dead." But Robert Graves suggests in his *Greek Myths* that the sailor misunderstood the voice

¹¹ According to Greek myth, Ares had the youth Alectryon stand guard outside his door while the god indulged in illicit love with Aphrodite. Alectryon fell asleep, and Helios, the sun, walked in on the couple. Ares turned then turned Alectryon into a rooster.

¹² In Greek myth, Hera punished the mountain nymph Echo by taking away her voice, except in foolish repetition of another's shouted words

¹³ Acheron was known as the river of pain and one of five rivers of the underworld in Greek myth

TIME & SPACE ¹⁴

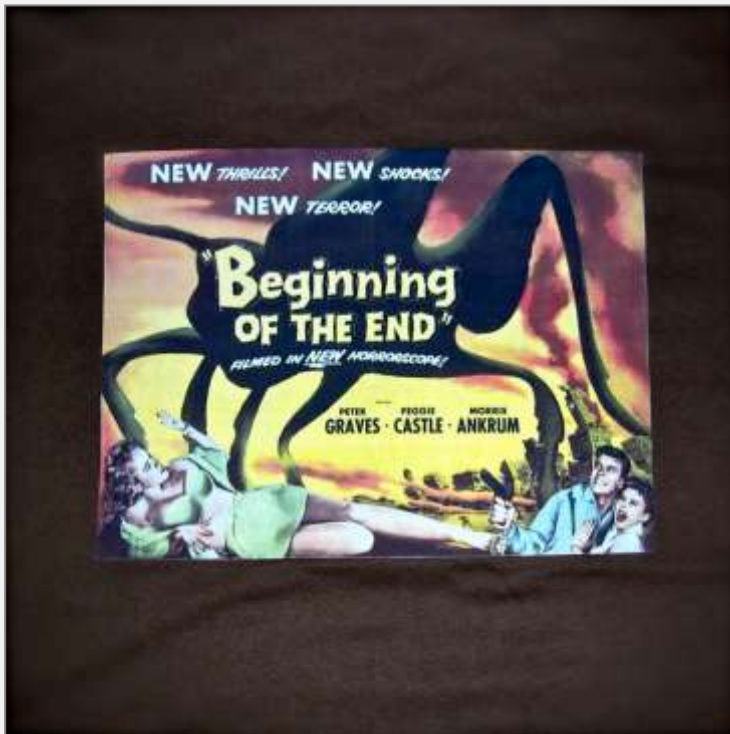
JUST YESTERDAY I LIFTED UP THE CURTAIN.
 A FACE STARED BACK LOOKING PRETTY CERTAIN
 THAT BLOOD WILL FLOW AND COMETS NEARLY MISS US.
 AND JUST LIKE THAT HE WAS WALKING IN THE DISTANCE.

JUST TODAY MY LIFE SEEMS LIKE A CIRCLE:
 A FACE STARING BACK, LOOKING LIKE MY DOUBLE,
 AND THEN WE WALK IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS,
 BOTH WONDERING WHEN WE'LL MEET ON THE HORIZON.

DRINK IN YOUR LIFE AND LET THE FEELING GO.
 TURN ON THE LIGHT TO WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW.
 EMBRACE THE SPACE AND FEEL THE TIME SEEP IN.
 DRINK DOWN THE WINE AND LET THE GOOD TIMES BEGIN.

MAYBE TOMORROW YOU'LL SEE ME ON THE CURB,
 STARING AT NOTHING, TRYING TO GET SOME NERVE.
 MAYBE ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE NOTHING MORE TO DO
 THAN WALK A LONG FLAT MILE AS IF IN MY OWN SHOES.¹⁵

DRINK IN YOUR LIFE AND LET THE FEELING GO...



BEGINNING OF THE END¹⁶

DAYLIGHT IS OVERRATED.
 ONE MIGHT THINK I'D ESCAPED IT

'TIL YOU UNCOVERED ME
 FROM THE ROCKS AND DEBRIS,
 HANGING JUST BY A THREAD,
 THREAD-BARE AND LEFT FOR DEAD.
 WHO WOULD BELIEVE
 I WAS JUST HANGING,
 FREE-FLOATING,
 BARE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE END?

SUN BURNS OVER THE RAINBOW.
 WORLDS TURN OUT OF THEIR HALOES.

THE CHANCE THAT WE TAKE
 WHILE OUR ORBITS DECAY
 MIGHT SEEM DOOMED FROM THE START,
 LIKE BLACK HOLES AT THE HEART.
 YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE—
 NOW I'M JUST HANGING FREE,
 FLOATING
 HERE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE END...

¹⁴ Time & Space: in one of the later opening sequences of *Mystery Science Theater 3000 (MST3K)*, a street sign where Time and Space intersect is shown; both refer to the concept of "space-time"

¹⁵ Allusion to the 1970 song "Walk a Mile in My Shoes" by Joe South

¹⁶ *Beginning of the End* is the title of a 1957 sci-fi movie starring Peter Graves, riffed by *MST3K*, where giant irradiated grasshoppers threaten life as we know it

BLACK T

POCKY JOE STALIN,¹⁷
AND CUT-OUT BIN LADEN,¹⁸
AND BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE—¹⁹
ALL DIGGIN' MY BLACK T.

BARRY FITZGERALD,²⁰
AND HAROLD THE BARREL,²¹
AND REMDAWG J. REMY—²²
ALL DIGGIN' MY BLACK T.

WILL.I.AM IDOL,²³
AND ROBERTO BERTOL,²⁴
AND PUNK CHUCK DUKOWSKI—²⁵
ALL DIGGIN' MY BLACK T.



LOOKIN' 4 ROCK

I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR THE SOUND OF VIOLENCE.
AN EAR TO THE GROUND FOUND GOLDEN SILENCE,
A DOWNLOAD OF ETHER FOR THE SÉANCE.
HOUDINI, WHY DO HE TRY MY PATIENCE?²⁶

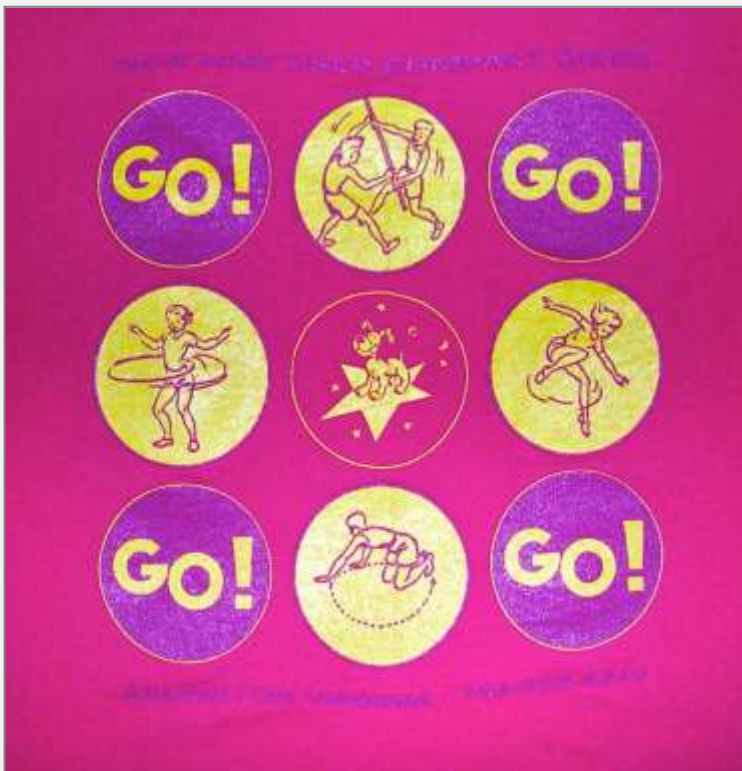
I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR ROCK...
I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR LEWIS & CLARK,²⁷
BUT THE 'POD PEOPLE SAY I'M GOING TOO FAR.²⁸

I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR NEW SONGS OF INNOCENCE,
BUT A BUTT TO THE HEAD BODES BITTER SEQUENCE:
A MOUSE CLICKS ON CUBED ANTIDEPRESSANT;
BLUE MEANIES WILL SOON BE IN YOUR BASEMENT...²⁹

THEY'VE BEEN LOOKIN' FOR ROCK...
THEY'VE BEEN LOOKIN' FOR LEWIS & CLARK,
AND THE PRESIDENT SAYS THEY'RE WALKING LATE AFTER DARK.

I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR SOME LOVE AMONG THE RUINS.³⁰
MEDIOCRITY'S THE MESSAGE FROM MY INNER MCLUHAN.³¹
UTOPIAN AD VENTURES IN OBLIVION.³²
COULD YOU PLEASE JUST SET ME FREE AND CALL IT EVEN?

I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR ROCK... I BEEN LOOKIN' FOR LEWIS & CLARK,
BUT THE PRESIDENT SAYS I'M WALKING LATE AFTER DARK.



¹⁷ Stalin's face was severely scarred from smallpox contracted at age 7

¹⁸ A "cut-out" is recording industry slang for a deeply-discounted recording, & record stores displayed these in cut-out bins; even before Bin Laden was killed, Cut-Out Bin Laden seemed like a great name for a band, but maybe more so once he was taken out; the phrase can also be taken to mean cardboard cut-out

¹⁹ Bonnie Prince Charlie was the grandson of King James II/VII who instigated the Jacobite uprising of 1745 in an attempt to restore an absolute monarchy in the UK

²⁰ Barry Fitzgerald was an Irish actor who won an Oscar for his performance in the 1944 movie *Going My Way*

²¹ "Harold the Barrel" is the title of a song by Genesis from its 1971 *Nursery Cryme* album, about a restaurant owner who commits suicide

²² RemDawg J. Remy is a Red Sox color commentator for NESN (New England Sports Network)

²³ Will.I.Am is a member of the Black Peas

²⁴ Roberto Bertol was a Spanish footballer during the '40s

²⁵ Chuck Dukowski is a founding member of pioneering punk band Black Flag

²⁶ Harry Houdini, turn of the century illusionist & escape artist, turned his energies in the '20s to debunking psychics & spiritualists, often attending seances in disguise

²⁷ "Looking for Lewis & Clark" is a song by the Long Ryders from their 1985 record *State of Our Union*; Kowtow played the song live when supporting *Exalted*

Headband in 2009 and ended up borrowing liberally from the song when penning "Lookin' 4 Rock" because of the somewhat paranoiac, conspiracy theory-tinged lyrics

²⁸ "Pod People" is a play on the iPod and the movie *Pod People*, another riff-victim of *MST3K*

²⁹ Blue Meanies are the buffoonish, music-hating creatures in the surreal 1968 Beatles film *Yellow Submarine*

³⁰ "Love Among the Ruins" is a poem by Robert Browning; it's also quoted in the title track of Tonio K's 1979 album *Life in the Foodchain*

³¹ Marshall McLuhan was a philosopher of communication theory known for coining the expression "the medium is the message"

³² *Adventures in Utopia* is a 1979 album by Todd Rundgren's Utopia

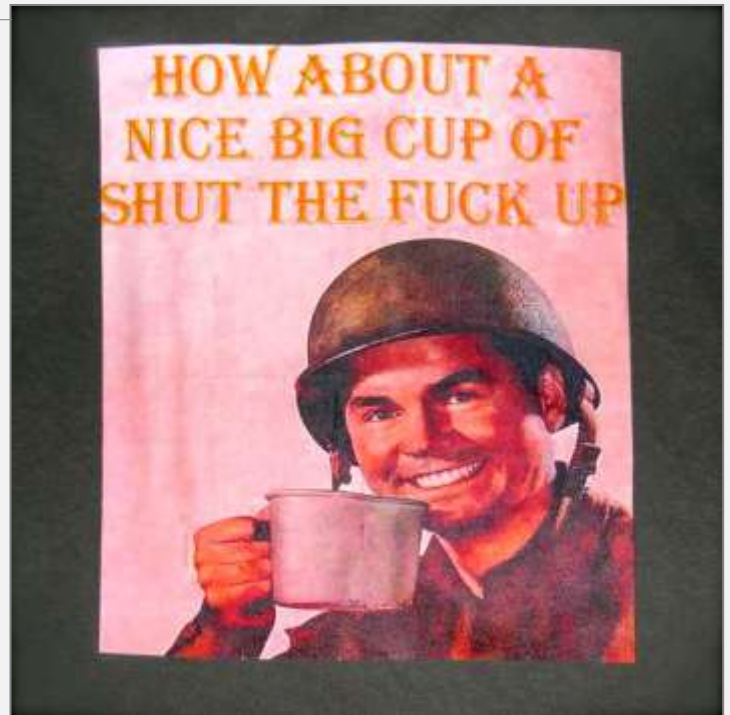
CAMP FOLLOWERS³³

I RODE OVER THE UNDERWRITER,
HIS THICK RED PEN
STUCK IN MY RIGHT REAR TIRE.
I TOOK UP WITH A BLIND STREETWALKER,
GRUBSTAKED HER RENT
TO GLIMPSE HER BRAILLE LIPS FALTER.

THESE DAYS
ALL OF US ARE CAMP FOLLOWERS,
SCULLIONS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.
DREAMS STAY
BURIED BENEATH THE SALT CEDAR.³⁴
CREPE-HANGERS AND NIGHT PORTERS—
WE ARE ALL CAMP FOLLOWERS.

I BOXED OUT THE STOCK INSTIGATOR,
HIS SPOOKY TOOTH³⁵
SLUNG FROM MY REARVIEW MIRROR.
I TOOK UP WITH A TRUE BELIEVER.
SHE LOVED ME NOT,
BUT SHE LET ME BEAT HER.³⁶

THESE DAYS...



GADABOUT³⁷

A BUTTERFLY OUT OF REACH OF DHARMA'S³⁸ NET
LIT UPON ME LIKE A BURNED-OUT CIGARETTE.
AN EMISSARY OF CELESTIAL DREAMS DIVINE,
APHRODITE WITH AN ERRANT LENGTH OF TWINE.

AN ARROW STICKING IN THE PALM OF DHARMA'S HAND
CAST ASPERSIONS ON THIS CARNAL REPRIMAND.
SMOKY SIGNALING FROM KAMADEVYA'S³⁹ LAIR,
A GIFT OF PLEASURE AND A WANTON CROSS TO BEAR.

GADABOUT, GADABOUT
GONNA HAVE TO DO WITHOUT.
GADABOUT, GADABOUT
DOWN AND OUT IN FULLER POUT.

DOWN AND OUT.

³³ "Camp follower" is a term used to identify civilians who follow armies, including family members of soldiers, as well as service providers, both legal and illicit
³⁴ Salt cedar, also known as Tamarisk, is a deciduous tree that has become an invasive species in the Southwest US; also, in Genesis 21:33, Abraham planted the tree at Beer-sheba, and in Egyptian myth, the body of Osiris was hidden for a time in a salt cedar in Byblos until retrieved by Isis
³⁵ Spooky Tooth was an English rock band whose 1973 album was titled *You Broke My Heart, So I Busted Your Jaw*
³⁶ Allusion to the line from the Beatles' "Getting Better": *I used to be cruel to my woman / I beat her and kept her apart from the things that she loved*
³⁷ A "gadabout" is a restless and aimless seeker of pleasure
³⁸ Dharma means "natural law" and is a central concept in Indian philosophy and religion
³⁹ Kamadeva is the Hindu god of human love or desire, who was turned to ash by Shiva and then reincarnated as a disembodied form and spread across the universe

BLACK TOURMALINE⁴⁰

I WAS LONELY—
 NOW I'M A LONER.
 I WAS SOLD OUT—
 NOW I'M A SOLDIER.
 I WAS CUT OFF—
 NOW I GET CLOSER.
 I WAS BURNED DOWN—
 NOW I CATCH FIRE.
 MEMORIES LIKE DREAMS
 LIVE LIFE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN
 ETERNAL BACKGROUND
 OF COSMIC BLEED,⁴¹
 SPLITTING ATOMS
 ON NARROW BEAMS.

KICK BACK THE KARMA—
 MY BLACK TOURMALINE...



TAMP DOWN THE HORIZON

PUT ON YOUR WASHED-GREY RAINCOAT,
 GET TO THE LOCAL STORE
 SET DOWN A SONG OF SADNESS
 AT THE OLD RED HOUSE DOOR.⁴²

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE CLOUDS
 THAT DOESN'T SEEM QUITE RIGHT,
 YOU'RE WONDERING ALOUD⁴³
 UNDER MAROONING MORNING SKY.

PUSH ALONG THE SHOULDER
 TIL STREETS TURN UP THE SUN;
 PULL YOUR YELLOWED COLLAR CLOSER,
 TAMP DOWN THE HORIZON.

A HANGING OF THE HEART,
 BLOWN BY RESTLESS BREEZE;
 AN EMPTY BOWL OF MADNESS,
 TWISTING ROOTLESS TREES:

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE CLOUDS
 THAT DOESN'T SEEM QUITE RIGHT,
 YOU'RE WONDERING ALOUD
 AT EACH ABSINTHE STREAK OF LIGHT.

PUSH ALONG THE SHOULDER...

© 2012 TASTES LIKE ARMAGEDDON
 ALL WORDS BY K.POPOF, EXCEPT GADABOUT BY M. DOYON

⁴⁰ Black tourmaline is a crystal mineral thought by some to provide psychic protection from negative energy

⁴¹ Allusion to Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation, a cosmology term for the thermal radiation which almost uniformly fills the observable universe

⁴² *The Red House* is a 1947 psychological thriller starring Edward G. Robinson; "Red House" is also a song by Jimi Hendrix, appearing on the UK version of *Are You Experienced*

⁴³ "Wond'ring ALOUD" is a song by Jethro Tull from 1971's *Aqualung*